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ENCYCLOPEDIA

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OF

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CANADA'S

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PEOPLES

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not unique to North American ethnic groups; it is an instance of a wider social process, one that has been occurring in many societies, even highly traditional ones. In North America, however, the process has been accelerated by several factors: first, the presence of a large number and great diversity of ethnicities; second, relatively rapid technological and sociocultural change, accompanied by a constant stream of immigration from the early nineteenth century to the present; third, a tendency to see one mainstream socio-economic structure as the legitimate locus of aspirations for all groups, reinforced by the strong value placed on social mobility and achievement, and the perception of alternative structures as marginal; and finally, a democratic-individualistic ideology that places an emphasis on personal freedom and a philosophy of "live and let live." The deconstruction-reconstruction process makes multiple identities possible. As a result, at the collective level, it enables a democratic, multicultural society to function.

WSEVOLOD W. ISAJIW

**DELAWARE.** See ABORIGINALS: ALGONQUIANS/  
EASTERN WOODLANDS

**DENE.** See ABORIGINALS: NA-DENE

**DITIDAHT.** See ABORIGINALS: WAKASHANS

**DOGRIB.** See ABORIGINALS: NA-DENE

## DOUKHOBORS

### Origins

The term Doukhobor is derived from *Dukho-borets*, or Spirit Wrestler. It was first formulated in 1785 by the Russian Orthodox archbishop of Ekaterinoslav in the southern region (present-day Ukraine) of the Russian Empire, who used the term in a derogatory manner, implying that it referred to those who wrestled against the spirit of the church and God. The group itself, however, adopted the name with the understanding that it referred to people who "wrestle with the spirit of truth." Although comprising elements of religion and a distinct way of life, Doukhobors might best be described as a social movement characterized by love, human goodness, and justice. At present the largest number of Doukhobors outside the homeland is in Canada, which has a Doukhobor population of about 30,000. There are about the same number in the former Soviet Union.

The origins of the Doukhobor movement go back to the 1650s, when Patriarch Nikon introduced reforms in the Russian Orthodox Church. His action led to protest among many believers and the result was the development of several factions or schisms that came to be known as the *Raskol*, or great division. The *Raskol*, in turn, split into two groupings, *Popovtsi* (priestists) and *Bezpopovtsi* (priestless). The *Popovtsi* sought to return to the pre-reform Orthodox traditions, retaining both priests and the veneration of icons. That orientation is today best represented by the Old Believers. The *Bezpopovtsi* dispensed entirely with priests and some of

them, like the future Doukhobors, rejected all church trappings, including icons, sacraments, and even the Bible. They argued that God exists in spirit and truth, that each individual is his or her own church, and that there is no need for priests. Although the Doukhobors rejected a priesthood, they soon developed the principle of spiritual leadership, which during the nineteenth century tended to become hereditary.

By the time the Doukhobors became a distinct religious group in the early eighteenth century, they had rejected not only the Russian Orthodox Church but the tsarist regime that backed the official church. As a result, Doukhobors were frequently persecuted by the Russian imperial authorities and forced to live in peripheral regions of the empire, such as southern Russia (Kursk, Voronezh, Tambov, and Saratov provinces), Ukraine, the Don Cossack region, Transcaucasia, and far eastern Siberia (Irkutsk and Kamchatka).

The importance of spiritual leaders within the movement dates back to the 1730s, when a Socrates-like, unnamed, wandering teacher from Moscow appeared in the Kharkov province of Ukraine. He argued that the hierarchy and clergy are man-made inventions, that all churches and their rituals are therefore superfluous, and that monasticism is a distortion of human nature. He also criticized the existing social order, claiming that the tsar and church hierarchs were in no way superior to other people and that Russia's serf system was a disgrace to humanity. This first Doukhobor teacher proclaimed that all men and women are brothers and sisters.

Following in the footsteps of the unnamed wandering teacher was Sylvan Kolesnikov, a Doukhobor organizer in Russia's Ekaterinoslav province (present-day Ukraine). Kolesnikov opened his home as a learning centre, where he also taught the Doukhobors to survive by evasion, stressing that external forms of religion are unimportant and that a believer might profess any religion provided that they remained true to themselves and lived a good and simple life. He also introduced the custom of bowing to the God within every person, and he stressed use of the oral tradition based on the so-called "book of life."

Next came Ilarion Pobirokhin, a prosperous wool dealer in the Tambov and Kharkov provinces, who taught that truth is not found in books but rather in the spirit. What was important, therefore, was not the Bible but rather the "book of life" of living memory. Under Pobirokhin's leadership, the Doukhobor oral literature of hymns was greatly expanded. It was not long, however, before Pobirokhin became taken with his own self-importance and proclaimed himself to be the living Christ, arguing that his divinity was passed on to him via chosen individuals since apostolic times. Not surprisingly, Pobirokhin's claim caused friction among the Doukhobors themselves and brought as well persecution from tsarist Russian authorities.

For most of the nineteenth century, Doukhobor life in the Russia Empire was characterized by two developments: frequent internal power struggles between the community's hereditary leaders, including figures like Savelii Kapustin, Lukeriia Kalmykova, Mikhail Gubanov, and Petr Verigin; and alternative periods of tolerance and persecution by the Russian imperial government. During the 1840s, most Doukhobors (numbering about 4,000 at the time) were exiled to Transcaucasia.



After a period of cooperation with the authorities during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, about 5,000 were allowed to settle in the newly acquired territory of Kars near Russia's border with the Ottoman Empire. This period of tolerance ended in 1895, however, when Doukhobor military recruits and then civilian community members began to burn their firearms. The tsarist government reacted to Doukhobor pacifism by new persecutions during which several hundred were exiled to Yakutsk in far eastern Siberia and others were isolated in their community. The remainder, with the help of the renowned Russian novelist and committed pacifist Leo Tolstoy, sought refuge by emigrating to Canada.

The Doukhobors in far eastern Siberia were basically left alone by the tsarist regime until it fell in 1917. Under the new Soviet regime, the Doukhobors managed to survive because of their distance from the centre of political authority in Moscow and most especially because of their ability to downplay external forms of religion in favour of an emphasis on a person's private beliefs.

### Migration

Doukhobor emigration from the Russian Empire dates to the late 1890s, when an appeal for help authorized by Tolstoy drew attention to the cruelty being perpetrated on the Doukhobors in Transcaucasia. Drawn up in 1896, it was signed by Paul I. Biryukov, whom Tolstoy had sent to the area to investigate the situation at first hand. Together with two other followers of Tolstoy, Ivan Tregubov and Vladimir Chertkov, he was exiled for his involvement in the affair. Chertkov went to England, where he established a publishing venture in Russian and in English. Through his activities, donations were made to the Doukhobor cause, including \$17,000 from the proceeds of Tolstoy's *Resurrection*. The Society of Friends (Quakers) took up the cause because they shared the Doukhobors' abhorrence of war, the swearing of oaths, outward sacraments, and a separate priesthood. Finally, in February 1898, the tsar granted the persecuted dissidents permission to leave Russia.

Among the destinations considered were Chinese Turkistan, Manchuria, Syria, Egypt, Texas, Hawaii, Central America, and Brazil. However, only Cyprus, which had been under British rule since 1878, was available as an immediate refuge; here 1,126 Doukhobors, with the assistance of the Quakers, found a temporary haven in the summer of 1898. As a more permanent location, Canada seemed to provide the most promise. The anarchist leader Pyotr Kropotkin, who had visited Toronto in 1897 to attend a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, was impressed by Mennonite settlements in the Canadian northwest. His views appealed to members of Chertkov's committee, and he was invited to meeting with them and the Quakers administering the Doukhobor fund. James Mavor, professor of political economy at the University of Toronto, who was an expert on the prairies and a friend and admirer of Tolstoy and Kropotkin, was contacted. Kropotkin advised Mavor that the situation was desperate and that the remaining dissidents must leave from the port of Batumi at once. Three conditions were essential if the group was to emigrate to Canada: exemption from military service, complete independence in the organization of their community, and large blocks of land.

Mavor wrote to Clifford Sifton, minister of the interior in the Liberal government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who had been actively promoting immigration to western Canada. The prosperity of the west depended on settlement along the route of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which had been completed in 1885. Since, in Tolstoy's words, the Doukhobors were "the best farmers in Russia," they were ideal immigrants. In 1898 a delegation of ten arrived in Canada to negotiate an agreement. The party included two Doukhobors, Ivan Ivin and Peter Makhortov, and their families, escorted by Prince D.A. Hilkev and Aylmer Maude, an Englishman who had spent many years in Moscow. The group considered a large territory in the Beaver Lake area near Edmonton as a possible location, but local opposition to non-British settlers put an end to the idea.

In the North-West Territories (now Saskatchewan), the delegates found three blocks of land that looked promising; they included some 162,000 hectares with excellent soil and a good water supply, in addition to 135,000 hectares of swamp and other non-arable land. The settlement of the Doukhobors on this territory was approved by Sifton. Each immigrant who reported to the immigration office in Winnipeg would receive a bonus of \$5 and an additional \$1.50 towards transportation costs. A grant of 65 hectares of arable land would be made to each male over the age of eighteen or head of household. A special committee was set up in Winnipeg to disburse the money placed in the Doukhobor fund, which was intended to assist the settlers after their arrival and help them to purchase any supplies needed for the establishment of their colonies. The Doukhobors' request for recognition as conscientious objectors was granted by an order-in-council of 6 December 1898.

After these arrangements had been made, the Quaker committee chartered two ships, each of which made two voyages between December 1898 and the following June. In total, 7,500 Doukhobors arrived in Canada, of whom 65 percent were adults and the rest children (many of them under five years of age). Some 55 percent of the newcomers were females and 45 percent males. Despite this mass movement, however, over 12,000 Doukhobors remained in Russia, including members of the Middle Party, who refused to join the emigration because of disagreement over such issues as vegetarianism and sexual intercourse, which was proscribed by Peter Verigin. Exiled in Siberia, he did not come to Canada until late in 1902. As well, most of Michael Gubanov's Small Party stayed in the Caucasus. Following the arrival of the Doukhobors in 1898–99, immigration to Canada virtually came to an end, except for small groups who arrived in 1905 and 1911.

### Arrival and Settlement

Western Canada was still a frontier society when the Doukhobors arrived, although the population of Winnipeg had reached 50,000. Few schools existed except in the towns, and much of the land was still unsettled. After stopping at immigration halls in Winnipeg, Dauphin, Selkirk, Yorkton, and Prince Albert, advance parties went on to the areas reserved for the Doukhobors. The tracts had been given the settlers en bloc, with the understanding that they would distribute the land as they saw fit. It was unsurveyed, and there were no roads and few bridges, so that ferries had to be constructed across rivers. Each of the three colonies comprised



nearly 400 square kilometres, one-third of it bush and swamp. The Doukhobors from Georgia, along with some from Elizavetpol and the Kars region, settled in the North Colony. Most of the Kars people went to the Prince Albert Colony, while the largest settlement, the South Colony, was comprised of migrants from all groups, including those who had been in Cyprus.

Two of the reserves were in the northeast corner of what was then Assiniboia Territory (now southern Saskatchewan). The North Colony (also called Thunder Hill) was located 112 kilometres from Yorkton and contained six townships. The South Colony, with an annex called Devil's or Good Spirit Lake Colony and containing fifteen townships, was situated 48 kilometres from Yorkton. The town, on the north line of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), served as a shipping and trade centre for the colonists in the two reserves. An arrangement was made between the government and the CPR by which the railway exchanged its holdings in the area for land elsewhere, thus allowing the Doukhobors to settle in compact communities rather than on alternative homestead land. Prince Albert, or Saskatchewan, Colony (also known as the Duck Lake and later Blaine Lake Colony) comprised the third reserve; it consisted of twenty townships 320 kilometres to the northwest in Saskatchewan Territory, where only even-numbered sections were reserved for Doukhobors. The southern part of the reserve was 32 kilometres northwest of Saskatoon, but the railway centre during the early years was at Rosthern, 40 kilometres to the east on the Prince Albert line.

The Doukhobors settled in a village pattern not unlike the that of the peasant commune, or *mir*, in Russia. Verigin had advised them to establish themselves on a communal basis, with no more than fifty families to a village. Such an arrangement would enable the limited resources, money from the fund and other donations, to reach the people. Log dwellings luted with clay were common in the North Colony, while sod and clay houses were built in the South and Prince Albert colonies. Later, many of the early dwellings were replaced with brick or wooden structures. Some villages erected a separate meeting house, or *dom*, although in most cases any home or large building in the village served this purpose. In all, more than ninety villages were established in Saskatchewan.

By 1907, however, a crisis over landownership had developed. In face of demands from the Conservative opposition for settlement on the British model, the Liberal government or Sir Wilfrid Laurier reneged on its earlier promise that Doukhobors could live and work in colonies. The new policy required individual homesteading and an oath of allegiance as the terms for free land. A large group of Doukhobors led by Verigin, who had been released from Siberian exile five years earlier, believed that in order to be a true Christian one must avoid individual ownership of property. Independent Doukhobors (those who opposed his leadership) filed claims for some 238 homesteads. Most simply crossed out the reference to an oath and substituted the word "affirm." Those who did not accept the new policy lost 121,000 hectares of improved land, though they were allowed to keep 6 hectares per family.

The following year, communal Doukhobors purchased 7,700 hectares of largely forested land in the

Kootenay and Boundary areas of British Columbia. Because it was a private transaction, an oath of allegiance was not required. By 1912 some 8,000 Doukhobors had relocated there and were living in such centres as Waterloo (Brilliant, at the confluence of the Kootenay and Columbia rivers), Castlegar, Grand Forks, Nelson, Shoreacres, and Slocan Park. They cleared forest lands, planted orchards, and constructed forty-four communes, each consisting of pairs of two-storey houses with connecting courtyards.

In Alberta the Doukhobors established a new colony on 4,557 hectares near the towns of Cowley and Lundbreck about 112 kilometres west of Lethbridge, on the route of the CPR. Verigin and his followers chose this location as an intermediate supply centre for the production of grain and vegetables and for stock raising. Thirteen villages were founded, and they were colonized by three hundred Doukhobors from British Columbia. Within two years, wheat and flour were being shipped from these foothill settlements to Brilliant. A fourteenth village, independent of the others, was started near Shouldice in 1926 by Anastasia Golobova; it lasted almost twenty years and numbered 165 people at its height. Another small colony was established at Kylemore, Saskatchewan, some 80 kilometres west of the South Colony. This purchase was made with the idea of increasing the return on grain because land was cheaper here than in the main settlement.

Some 150 Doukhobors from Siberia had emigrated to Canada in 1905, settling in Saskatchewan. Six years later 200 non-Veriginite believers arrived and took up homesteads in the Langham district of Saskatchewan, where they established close contacts with the independent Doukhobors in the Prince Albert Colony. Migrations from the original British Columbia settlement by the radical *svobodniki*, or Sons of Freedom, a splinter group established in Saskatchewan in 1902, took them elsewhere in the province – to Krestova in 1929, Gilpin in 1935, Hilliers on Vancouver Island in 1949, and Agassiz and Vancouver in 1962 – and to Uruguay in 1952. This last movement brought one thousand members of the group to the coast to be closer to family heads who were serving prison sentences for their activities. Unexpectedly, it exposed both adults and children to the assimilative forces of an industrial society and changed many of them forever.

The 1991 census found only 4,800 Doukhobors, based on a "religious" designation, in Canada. With a wider definition of religion, ethnicity, way of life, and social movement, the number today exceeds 30,000, of whom some 15,000 reside in British Columbia (mostly in the southern interior settlements of Castlegar and Grand Forks and in Vancouver), 11,000 in Saskatchewan (principally in the northeastern settlements of Verigin and Kamsack and the Saskatoon area), and 3,000 in Alberta (mostly in Calgary, with a few in the original settlements of Cowley and Lundbreck). The rest are scattered throughout Canada. Some 500 Doukhobors now reside in the American states of California and Oregon.

## Religion

Doukhobor roots are religious, but to describe the movement as a religion is insufficient. Its founders were simple peasants who, three hundred years ago under the tsar, formed a dissident group to challenge church or-



thodoxy. For these people, the confines of the church building, the doctrines of the Bible, and the authoritarianism of the priest or minister were more a hindrance than an aid to salvation. They also regarded the rule of kings, queens, and tsars as an outmoded institution based on inequality and violence. Like the Quakers, the Doukhobors sought the realm of God — which for them was also love, truth, and beauty — in the hearts and minds of men and women. The expression "God is love" was not only metaphorically correct but also real. A God in the heavens was nonsensical, and words without deeds were emptiness. To the Doukhobors, the social structure of the world around them seemed a perversion of the natural social order. Since the early days, there has been a steady progression in their thinking from a sectarian religion to a moral and social movement. The concept of God within each individual is central to their beliefs. The ten commandments, especially the prohibition against killing, are to be obeyed. But they reject the Bible as a sacred document, as they do the formal institution of the church and its hierarchy and sacraments.

The search for moral and philosophical roots, tied to the inner God, characterizes the Doukhobors as a people. The most far-reaching aspect of the movement is a belief that the individual need not be associated with any religion or know anything about the Bible or other sacred book to have direct access to the power, energy, and health-giving benefits of love and to the essence of God in the heart of each person. This anarchistic tendency explains why the large majority of the community do not belong to Doukhobor organizations, even though, when pressed, they will describe themselves as Doukhobors or internationalists. Many consider themselves *plakun trava* (a grass that moves against the prevailing current of the water). A study in the 1970s showed that Doukhobor ideology was particularly resilient in the face of the twentieth-century forces of secularization, modernization, and professionalization. Yet some members of the community have adapted to society around them in a desire to be more "modern" and "respectable." By calling the meeting-house a church, they can obtain status and tax exemptions. For some of them, the introduction of bibles into the meeting-house and the carrying out of rituals will bring them into favour with "God-fearing" churchgoers.

All Doukhobor services are related to *molenie* (prayer), the usual title of Sunday morning *sobranie* (a gathering of people), which consists of formal greetings, the recitation and singing of Doukhobor psalms, the bow to the spirit within (in British Columbia accompanied by hand pumping and kissing in a distinctive manner), the singing of hymns, and the final greetings. This service is usually followed by a less formal gathering. During the service, men traditionally stand on one side and women on the other; bread, salt, and water are placed on a table separating the two at the head of the room. Among all Doukhobors, the Lord's Prayer (*Otchie nash* in Russian) is read before every official function, and a few families also repeat it before meals.

### Community Life

In the homeland, life in the commune was based on self-sufficiency, both economical and social. The village assembly, composed of heads of households, met frequently, usually on the first day of the week, to discuss

the affairs of the community. A *starista*, or elder, was selected whose duty corresponded to that of a chairman or speaker. Any contact with the outside world took place in the orphans' home and was made by the leader of the day, together with the *starista*. Because the commune was a self-contained unit, there was no need for the sort of organizations common in industrial society. Women wove cloth and made the clothes. Men manufactured shoes, harnesses, and all kinds of farm implements. There were meetings (*sobranies*) at which women and men participated equally in the decision making.

The Doukhobor vision of God's presence within each individual envisaged a society without an established class structure — priesthood, bureaucracy, or aristocracy. At the same time, a contradiction arose in the late 1770s when Ilarion Pobirokhin had proclaimed himself Christ and claimed that his divinity had been passed down from the time of the apostles. His successors accepted this aberration as a way to institutionalize their power, a theocracy brought to Canada by the Verigin family. It resulted in splits between those who supported the Verigins' divine leadership (the community Doukhobors) and those who opposed it (the independent Doukhobors). All today agree on the values of pacifism and non-violence and the use of a cappella singing, and reject the church, the priesthood, and the Bible, but the sharing of power based on a spiritual or an elected leadership has been the principal cause of internal divisions throughout the past century.

When the first Doukhobors arrived in Canada in the 1890s, they encountered a hierarchical society in which those of British origin were at the top and newly arrived European and Asian immigrants at the bottom. They resented this class system, which resembled that of tsarist Russia. Initially, the newcomers worked at such tasks as cutting lumber at thirty cents a day, below the going rate. But they soon became more competitive in their business relations. The frontier society encouraged individualistically minded members to leave the commune and strike out on their own. Signing for homesteads, they became landowners. They sent their children to public schools, and some eventually became lawyers, doctors, engineers, and teachers. Still staunch pacifists, the independents formed their own organization on democratic principles to protect their rights, but during World War I they had to stave off attempts by Peter V. Verigin to persuade the government to take away their exemption from military service.

His son, Peter Petrovich Verigin, in 1928 tried to placate the independent Doukhobors, as well as non-Doukhobors, by organizing the Society of Named Doukhobors and adopting a declaration of principles. It stated that the community Doukhobors believed in one leader, Jesus Christ, who was the son of God, that its members did not recognize any political party, and that they did not vote in elections. The Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (USCC), the organization formed in 1938 to succeed both the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood and the Society of Named Doukhobors of Canada, has since adopted this document as its own. The "spiritual-divine" style of leadership has gradually declined in favour of a democratically elected model. In 1961 the current USCC leader, John J. Verigin, was elected its honorary chairman.



The USCC, representing the community Doukhobors, remains the main organization in Canada. It possesses the largest resources, including community centres in Grand Forks and Brilliant, an elected executive committee, four standing committees on peace and the environment, the future, lifestyle planning, and migration, and a youth and women's organization active throughout the interior of British Columbia. Among its projects are annual youth festivals in May characterized by traditional singing, speeches, and sports, a Sunday school program for pre-schoolers, school picnics, youth sports days, an outdoor picnic on Declaration Day in August, an annual family retreat, an in-house bilingual publication, *Iskra* (Spark; Brilliant, B.C., Grand Forks, N.D., 1943-), and a video club. A new residence, Sirotskii Dom, was built for the leader in Grand Forks in 1993. The paid-up membership totals one thousand, but the organization has many more supporters. It favours a spiritual leadership in a democratic cloak, a low *poklon* (bowing ritual) in the religious service, and the use of the Russian language.

The independent Doukhobors make up the second major group. They originally formed part of a more broadly based organization, the Union of Doukhobors of Canada, which was established in 1945 with eight thousand members. However, two years later the community Doukhobors withdrew. Today the independents are organized as the Canadian Doukhobor Society, with a current paid-up membership of 300 but endorsed by many more. Its headquarters are in Creston, British Columbia. The organization, which uses both the Russian and English languages, is oriented to moral issues and pacifism but rejects the 1928 declaration and the concept of spiritual leadership. Its members are involved in the peace and disarmament movement and closely work with the USCC in these activities, as well as in cultural programs such as the youth festivals. The organization owns no community centres and has no standing committees, but it commemorates Doukhobor Peace Day on 29 June, publishes a newsletter, and maintains a homepage on the World-Wide Web. Also, it established a joint research committee that between 1974 and the early 1980s held a number of symposia on the Doukhobor movement. These gatherings brought together some four hundred people from all sectors each month and served as a medium for community education.

The third group is composed of those formerly called the Sons of Freedom; within the community, they are commonly referred to as zealots, or *svobodniki*. Their organization, the Christian Community and Brotherhood of Reformed Doukhobors, was led by a non-Doukhobor, Stephen S. Sorokin, until his death in 1984; today, it is longer viable, with only several dozen members. In the 1990s those willing to associate with or be categorized as Sons of Freedom has greatly diminished in number. The core group mainly resides in the isolated community of Novoe Poselka (New Settlement), near Krestova, British Columbia. In 1995 one-half of the community refused to pay taxes, an action that produced tension with local authorities. It publishes a monthly newsletter, *Istina* (Truth), whose editor, a carpenter by trade, also builds coffins and conducts funerals at a fraction of the commercial rate.

Local and regional organizations have provided con-

tinuity for the Doukhobor movement. Each one has a women's group, whose members generally look after hospitality for the sobranies, as well as for weddings, funerals, seminars, concerts, and other events. The Saskatoon Doukhobor Society, one of the largest of the local groups, has been in existence since 1955. It owns a community centre, publishes a newsletter, and has an adult executive, a woman's group, and a choir. Among its activities are Russian-language instruction, the translation of Russian hymns into English, and a week-long bread-baking project at the annual Saskatoon Industrial Exhibition. The Doukhobor Society of Saskatchewan was established in 1989 to unite the scattered communities of Pelly, Kamsack, Verigin, Canora, Watson, Blaine Lake, Langham, and Saskatoon. The United Doukhobors of Alberta is based at Cowley, where Michael M. Verigin has served as secretary-treasurer since 1974. A small community centre is located nearby in Lundbreck; today, it is used infrequently because most of the members have moved to Calgary and other urban centres. In that city there is a Nifty 50s Seniors Club, while Kelowna and Creston have cultural associations.

Doukhobor youth have also contributed to group maintenance and revival. The Saskatoon Doukhobor Student Group in the 1950s organized a series of informative panel discussions about the movement and supported the first English-language Doukhobor publication, a monthly called the *Inquirer* (Saskatoon, 1954-58). Thirteen members participated in the 1957 World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow. The Doukhobor Youth National Executive Council, which was in existence from 1968 to 1974, sought unsuccessfully to unite all Doukhobor factions into one union. Its efforts did lead to the creation of an English-language youth magazine, *Mir* (Peace; Vancouver, 1973-81), and was sponsored by the Union of Young Doukhobors of Vancouver (UYD). In Castlegar young people founded a non-partisan Doukhobor Cultural Association in 1968 with the goal of a "step-by-step approach to unity." Although it has fewer than fifty members, the association has been active into the 1990s in arranging workshops, seminars, sports days, picnics, and fund-raising drives. A centennial project (commemorating one hundred years of Doukhobor history in Canada) is the construction by 1999 of a retreat complex at Whatshan Lake, British Columbia, for individuals and families "who embrace a philosophy ... [based] on the principle of universal kinship and the pursuit of peace through non-violent means. It also administers a low-income housing project for senior citizens in Castlegar sponsored by the Doukhobor Benevolent Society, which is involved in a similar project in Vancouver. A conference held in Saskatoon in December 1989 brought together community, independent, and zealot young people from British Columbia and Saskatchewan in discussion and included an impromptu concert that cut across group boundaries. The conference was followed by youth workshops in western Canada that had as their theme "Discoveries in Doukhoborism."

Non-sectarianism was also the goal of the UYD, organized in 1968 by a group of young people, most of whom were attending post-secondary educational institutions in the area. The association has helped to preserve the cultural and social traditions of the Doukhobors by holding concerts, participating in the



Canadian Folk Society concerts, performing in churches, on television, and at the Federation of Russian Canadians centre, and holding handicraft bazaars to raise money. Its choir has performed at the annual Doukhobor youth festivals in Castlegar and during the Montreal Olympics in 1976, and has made three successful concert tours of the interior of British Columbia. At its twentieth anniversary festivities in 1988, some 150 UYD alumni and their families gathered for a four-day summer camp that featured singing, games, and discussions. Since then, such camps have become an annual tradition.

Belonging to any of these organizations does not guarantee that one is a Doukhobor. But those who do belong demonstrate through their deeds the Doukhobor values of non-violence, love, hospitality, cooperation, and justice. The Doukhobor centennial in 1995 brought together all factions to celebrate the spirit of 1895, when their ancestors burnt their firearms in affirmation of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill."

### Economic Life

Their early history under the tsar influenced how many Doukhobors looked at economic life in the new world. Prolonged oppression by the established church, the state, and the aristocracy instilled in them a tradition of opposition to authority in general, to wealth and privilege, and to virtually all activities that contribute to wealth. This tradition was supported by the religious beliefs that "one does as the Spirit moves" and that "God's laws are supreme." On the other hand, despite their break from a feudal system, there was a considerable carry-over of subservience to authority instilled by generations of serfdom. In principle, the Doukhobor community in the homeland was one of free and equal individuals who obeyed only the dictates of their own consciences and functioned on a basis of voluntary co-operation. In fact, those who followed particular leaders became subservient to a highly centralized theocracy characterized by an extreme dependence upon their leader's authority.

Geographic isolation from other groups helped to hold the Doukhobors together; they were forced for their own survival to rely upon a simple, relatively self-sufficient economy based upon diversified agriculture and the supplementary trades of a peasant village community. It is not surprising, then, that the land took on an almost mystical concept for the Doukhobors and that farming was seen as the ideal occupation. On the Canadian prairies, survival was paramount. While the able-bodied men worked on railway building and as farmhands at subsistence wages, the women, old men, and children built the villages. When horses and oxen were lacking, women formed teams of twenty-four to pull the plough. They also made garments, rugs, shawls, and hangings from homespun fabrics. The men produced furniture, boots and shoes, ladles, harnesses, horseshoes, spades, spinning wheels, and tools of various kinds. From the outset, the Doukhobor community in Canada was torn by a three-way conflict between Russian peasant tradition, Doukhobor beliefs, and the attraction of materialism in the larger environment. The earliest villages were established and run on communal lines as Verigin had directed. Communal houses and dining halls were built, although many settlers lived in

their own dwellings. The land, acquired in large blocks from the government, was owned and managed cooperatively, as were most stores, livestock, machinery, and other facilities. Wages received from outside employment were, in theory if not in practice, pooled in the general earnings of the community. The first cooperative, a Doukhobor-owned store in Swan River, Manitoba, encountered difficulties and eventually ceased because the capitalistic ethic did not coincide with the group's cultural background.

Growing inequality between the more well-to-do families from Kars and Elizavetpol and the poorer ones from the Wet Mountains created friction and frustrated the communal enterprise. Those who were better off generally opposed communal ownership because they stood to lose from it. A number of them withdrew and either became members of the independent group or struck out on their own. The Sons of Freedom evolved into a conservative group that opposed deviation from the anti-materialistic, cooperative norm; they protested against the breakdown of community life and attempted to curb the growing individualism of the well-to-do. Their first pilgrimage in November 1902 brought out 1,600 participants, who left their villages and trekked to Yorkton. While the women and children remained there, six hundred men continued on to Minnedosa, Manitoba. They expressed their opposition to government pressure to acquire individual homesteads.

The colonies of community Doukhobors under the leadership of Verigin were incorporated in 1917 as the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood (CCUB). It had its headquarters in Verigin, Saskatchewan, until 1931, when it moved to Brilliant. The CCUB built roads, bridges, sawmills, concrete reservoirs, and irrigation facilities and planted tens of thousands of fruit trees, which eventually supplied excellent produce for its jam factories. As in the earlier Saskatchewan settlements, earnings from outside employment were in principle pooled in the common treasury. This system was later changed to an annual assessment levied on every adult male. Each village in turn was responsible for raising its quota for the overall operations of the CCUB, which included brick factories and flour mills in Saskatchewan. Verigin imposed a rigid austerity program on himself and his followers in order to reduce expenditures, pay off the debt, and expand capital assets.

However, the CCUB began to decline rapidly following Verigin's death in October 1924 as the result of a still-unsolved explosion on a train and the accession of his son, Peter Petrovich, to the leadership. The executive of the CCUB had borrowed \$350,000 from the Bank of Commerce, secured by bonds held by the National Trust Company. Under the younger man and the impact of the Great Depression, the organization went further into debt and finally into bankruptcy in 1937. Foreclosure proceedings were instituted the following year. Community accountant William A. Soukoreff gave four reasons for the CCUB collapse: heavy mortgage rates, a decline in the paid-up membership from 8,000 in 1908 to 2,113 in 1937, the increasing number of non-payers, and enormous losses from the activities of radical members as well as unknown outsiders who had resorted to arson as a form of protest against government persecution or for other reasons.



A comprehensive study of community lands in the period 1928-31 concluded that inefficiency contributed to the collapse. Independent Doukhobor farms had crop yields that averaged 50 percent higher than those of community Doukhobors, orchard cultivation was neglected, and an elaborate irrigation system estimated in 1930 to have cost \$438,000 was of "unsound design" and never worked. The failure by management to seek expert advice was a related problem. The study found that the managers were frequently illiterate people chosen by the community, whose members tended to scorn education and outside expertise. Peter P. Verigin's smoking, drinking, and gambling also contributed to the eventual downfall of the community.

The provincial government took measures to forestall the threatened eviction by paying the money owed to the creditors, Sun Life Assurance Company and the National Trust Company. It ruled that the CCUB was not eligible for protection under the Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act because a limited company could not technically be considered a farmer. Many Doukhobors felt that the government tricked them by gaining control of their buildings and some 7,700 hectares of land (with properties in Saskatchewan and Alberta, worth about \$6 million) for less than \$300,000. A Land Settlement Board was set up to administer the land, which the community members rented for a nominal amount until 1961, when it was sold back to them for a price much below market value. When the receiver had completed its operations in 1945, \$142,000 had been left for the legal heirs of the CCUB. By 1980 the money had grown to \$267,000, and a trust fund was established for community purposes.

World War II greatly improved the economic status of the Doukhobors in British Columbia as hundreds of carpenters and other construction workers found jobs erecting a new dam at Brilliant, a project designed to increase hydroelectric power for the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company plants in Trail. The war, however, increased resentment against the Doukhobors in the Nelson and Grand Forks communities because their young, able-bodied men were exempt from military service. For years many Doukhobors complained that they were "last hired and first fired." The Cold War also had a negative effect on Doukhobor employment. Members of the community failed to gain jobs or promotions because they were identified as Russians and therefore not to be trusted.

In 1950-52 researchers established a profile of workers in the interior of British Columbia. Although they resided on small farms and in villages, Doukhobor labourers were extremely mobile in seeking employment in non-farming industries and trades in the larger cities and towns and, to a lesser extent, in more distant logging camps and mining towns. Trail and Nelson, where one-third of the 1,437 Doukhobor workers in the sample were employed, were the main centres. Upon their arrival in British Columbia, Doukhobors had worked in logging and sawmilling, cutting and transporting logs for railway ties as well as for their own dwellings and farm buildings. The CCUB's extensive logging and sawmilling enterprises provided a training ground for large numbers of them, both as executives and as labourers. In the 1950s almost 43 percent were concentrated in the fields of carpentry and forest products. By far the major portion of the 655 listed in the study as unskilled

were in general construction. Only a small fraction were in such white-collar positions as managerial, professional, sales, and clerical work. A smaller proportion of women among the Doukhobors than in the general population sought employment outside the home, with many concentrated in the category of food workers (almost entirely fruit packers and harvest hands employed seasonally in the Okanagan valley). The other areas of employment for women were as cooks and waitresses and in domestic service. Few were in white-collar or office jobs. Ten major firms employing 4,000 workers had only 84 Doukhobors on their payrolls, a result, it would seem, of discrimination as well as the Doukhobors' personal preference for seasonal work.

The study also found that the Doukhobors generally had lower costs of living than other wage earners, a fact that enabled many of them to achieve a more substantial lifestyle than most casual labourers enjoy. Those in British Columbia were definitely not joiners of organizations such as trade unions, the Board of Trade, and service clubs. At the time of the study, the standard of living of most Doukhobors in the province was not high; their houses were generally modest, unpainted, sparsely furnished, and not located in the more desirable residential areas. Once the Land Settlement Board began to sell land back to the Doukhobors in 1961, however, they built new houses for themselves. Today, many spacious and expensive homes are to be found throughout the Kootenay and Boundary areas, and most Doukhobors own one or more cars or trucks.

By the early 1990s, their situation had improved to the point that they compared well with other Canadians. The Saskatchewan and Alberta independent Doukhobors had a head start on those in British Columbia because they had few, if any, inhibitions about education. Many of their sons (and later their daughters) obtained university degrees and found their way into such occupations as teaching, medicine, law, engineering, science, commercial art, publishing, consulting, the mass media, and the civil service. British Columbia Doukhobors were hampered for several generations because their early leaders opposed higher education, but, once this attitude changed in the 1950s, the young people moved ahead rapidly. Today, they are found in most occupations, especially education, medicine, and management. No longer predominantly a farming people, Doukhobors now depend for their livelihood primarily on wage employment. Although they continue to cultivate small tracts of land for part of their food needs or to supplement their cash incomes, much of this work is carried out by the women and children.

### Family and Kinship

Traditionally, Doukhobors regarded marriage as a sacred relationship between two individuals; they objected to the intervention of any third party, such as the clergy, and therefore did not recognize the role of government or the church in the union. The essence of the marriage ceremony was a demonstration of consent on the part of the parents and the witness of relatives and friends. The Saskatchewan government recognized the Doukhobor form of marriage in 1909, and British Columbia did so in 1953. In both provinces, parties to the marriage are obliged to complete the standard registration form, have it witnessed, and send it to the local



registrar of vital statistics. In the villages, weddings took place in the home, with only the immediate relatives in attendance. With the Doukhobors' greater affluence, celebrations are now often held in a public hall, where many friends and relatives can attend and share in an elaborate banquet, liquor, and often a dance. With a degree of breakdown in the community, intermarriage has increased, and some couples have had their union sanctioned by a civil ceremony or a minister from another religious group.

The shift away from the communal lifestyle characteristic of the Doukhobors in the homeland and the early years in Canada towards individual landownership has resulted in a corresponding change from an extended family to a nuclear one. As well, family size has been reduced from an average of eight children in the homeland to two in this country. But the role of women as protectors of the home, educators of the children, and leaders in the community has remained central to Doukhobor life. In Canada during the early years, women did not leave the close-knit settlements, and consequently they had no opportunity to learn the English language and Canadian customs. With the rapid technological change that followed World War II and new career opportunities, however, they increasingly entered professions such as teaching and nursing. Among the younger generation, there appears to be a mix of traditional and modern lifestyles: women are pursuing careers and raising children at the same time.

Generally, there has been a strong taboo among Doukhobors with regard to anything connected with sex. Children were told that "babies came from the river." This myth persisted to the 1950s, but, with modern sex education provided in schools and the availability of instructional literature, a greater frankness has prevailed. Children have also experienced more freedom in their upbringing. Traditionally, they played a role in the economic survival of the family unit by helping with such chores as gardening, fruit picking, and cooking. The child was taught to respect all adults and would not dare to say no to a parent. Though they participated in adult activities, young people were expected to keep quiet when their elders were speaking. A scolding or "bending the ears back" kept them in submission. At the same time, children felt at ease visiting a neighbouring village because they knew that any *baba* (grandmother), *deda* (grandfather), *dyadya* (uncle), or *tyota* (aunt) would look after them as their own.

Before the introduction of government-sponsored old age pensions and other social-security programs, children were responsible for the care of their elderly parents, and several generations often lived in the same household. In recent years, the parents have become more independent. To minimize the disruptive effects of homes for the elderly, Doukhobors in British Columbia in the 1980s began building their own institutions, which could provide for cultural expression through singing and traditional handicrafts. However, many members of the community are still bothered by this shift away from family care for the elderly.

In an attempt to escape discrimination during the Cold War, some Doukhobors changed their surnames to more Anglo-Saxon-sounding forms, such as Podwin for Podvinikoff. In recent years, others have returned to the original Russian spelling of names, such as Tarasov

instead of Tarasoff, Papove rather than Popoff, and Faminow for Faminoff (the ending "off" was added by immigration officers in the 1890s). A distinctive characteristic of the Doukhobor family has been the transfer of ideology, especially the values of pacifism, love, respect for adults, hospitality, and friendship to one's neighbour, from one generation to another. The bread, salt, and water placed on the table at Doukhobor meetings are symbols of a common humanity. Expressions such as *Slava Bogu* (Praise be to God), often used in formal greetings, acknowledge the spirit of God within each individual, a quality that unites the whole human race.

## Culture

Most Canadian Doukhobors are bilingual, speaking English as the language of business and a southern Russian dialect mixed with elements of central Russian, Belorusan, Ukrainian, and English within the community. In the extended family, knowledge of the heritage language was kept alive by the grandmother, who read psalms to the children at bedtime. Today, elders in the community express a concern about a loss of Russian among their youth, swept along by the forces of English-language education, competition for good grades, and the anti-Soviet propaganda of the Cold War. Books in Russian and in translation have helped to preserve the language and culture. The most notable is that of Vladimir Bonch-Bruевич, a Russian ethnographer who in 1899-1900 recorded traditional folklore among the new immigrants to Canada and published the *Zhivotnaia kniga Dukhobortsev* (Doukhobor Book of Life, 1909). A collection of over three hundred psalms, as well as parables, verses, and forms of greetings, it constitutes the musical and literary heritage of the Doukhobors.

A cappella singing has continued as the dominant mode of cultural expression. Singing of the psalms is characterized by long, drawn-out passages using staggered breathing. Although occasionally based on biblical models, the psalms were composed by the Doukhobors themselves or inherited from proto-Doukhobor groups that had broken away from the Russian Orthodox Church, some as early as the fifteenth century. Because of their archaic wording and difficult tempo, the psalms are gradually giving way to hymns and folk songs, which employ a faster tempo. Historical hymns deal with specific events in tsarist Russia, such as the 1895 burning of firearms, the persecution that followed, the migration, and the Doukhobor martyrs. Contemporary ones reflect social ideals and events among the Doukhobors in Canada.

During the past fifty years, many choral groups have sprung up, especially among the community Doukhobors but also among the independents of Saskatchewan and Alberta and the zealots of British Columbia. These groups have visited communities throughout North America, and over seventy albums and cassettes have been recorded. Choirs have participated in numerous events such as a tour of the Soviet Union in 1966, Expo 67 in Montreal, the Seattle world's fair in 1974, the opening of the British Columbia legislature that year and of the United Nations in 1982, a centennial tour of North America and Russia in 1995, and a youth festival in Cuba in 1997. The use of folk-song collections from the former Soviet Union has helped Doukhobors to preserve their knowledge of Russian. Hymn books and



musical scores are not used, except by some choirs in Saskatchewan. The choirs also do not have conductors, although a member of each group serves as director. Objection to the use of musical instruments was finally abandoned in the early 1970s when a piano was brought into a Doukhobor community centre for the use of a visiting Russian artist. Today, several groups have included guitars, accordions, and saxophones on their recordings, but musical instruments are still barred from religious meetings. Dancing was also traditionally frowned upon but is now practised by many young people.

There is a saying that every second Doukhobor is a writer, an allusion to the fact that members of the community have an inborn habit of philosophizing about life. Among the earliest scholars was Alex P. Harshenin, who in 1974 wrote a doctoral thesis on the Doukhobor language. Nina Olson studied the movement from an anthropological point of view, and from 1925 to 1992 Nick N. Kalmakoff collected, printed, and hand bound editions of traditional hymns and songs. Nicholas Zbitnoff, a Saskatchewan-born doctor who practised medicine in Ukiah, California, for many years, photographed Doukhobors and collected their family histories throughout his life.

Peter N. Maloff and William A. Soukoreff of British Columbia have produced folk histories in Russian, while Saskatchewan-born Eli A. Popoff has written many stories and several novels in Russian and English. The most prominent editor in the community, Peter P. Legebokoff, was responsible for the journal *Iskra* from 1952 to 1973. Ivan Sysoev, who composed more than a thousand hymns and poems in the Russian language, is the best example of a Doukhobor poet. With the exception of some productions in the 1930s, a radio script in the 1950s, and the occasional play, Doukhobors have not created many dramatic works. A multimedia presentation by the community in Saskatchewan in the 1970s, which incorporated songs, slides, acting, and narration, was an innovation. Alberta-born Larry A. Ewashen, known as both a playwright and a film-maker, wrote a play about the burning of firearms for the hundredth anniversary of this event in 1995. The most prominent Doukhobor artists are painters Frederick Nicholas Loveroff and Bill Perehudoff and sculptor William Koochin.

Among the publications catering to the Doukhobor community is *Iskra*, which today is issued twice a month as a bilingual journal of the USCC. Through its pages, readers are informed about their history, heritage, and current cultural activities. A radio program in Russian, which ran from 1970 to 1996 on the CKGF station in Grand Forks, was produced, directed, and narrated by singers Fred and Luba Rezansoff and their friends. Broadcast six days a week, it lasted for ten minutes; the first half was devoted to local and international news and the second to singing. The purpose was to keep the Russian language alive and to inform listeners about events in the homeland and the rest of the world. Doukhobor elders especially benefited from this program, which helped to dispel misconceptions about the community by providing a positive image of its activities. Though the program ceased on Fred Rezansoff's death in 1996, plans are currently under way for the Russian-American Broadcasting Company of New York

to provide a Russian-language radio and television service in Canada.

Other aspects of Doukhobor culture are influenced by the surrounding North American society. For example, the English language is gradually creeping into Sunday religious meetings in Saskatoon. To counter this development, the local society has a program of Russian-language instruction. Cultural festivals, family gatherings, and a growing interest in genealogy are indications of a renewed interest in roots. The celebration of Doukhobor Peace Day on 29 June unites all members of the community around the central issue of pacifism, while Declaration Day, held in British Columbia on the first Sunday in August, is a reaffirmation of Doukhobor beliefs. Panel discussions and symposia serve similar functions.

Clothing, food, and crafts are also forms of cultural expression. For choral performances, women often wear blouses, skirts, and *platoks* (kerchiefs) adapted from traditional Russian forms. Food grown in their own gardens is shared with friends and relatives in the form of such traditional dishes as *lapsheonik* (noodle loaf), *borshch* (cabbage soup), *pirogi* (filled with vegetable or fruit), *lapsha* (noodle soup), *vareniki* (cottage cheese or fruit dumplings), and *blintsi* (pancakes). Only a few members of the community are vegetarians, but a reverence for life remains a deep-seated value for all. Some women still knit socks, produce handmade rugs, or embroider distinctive Slavic designs, and men continue to make wooden ladles, sugar bowls, and spinning wheels. Modern medicine is fully supported in the community, but a few older Doukhobors rely on folk cures, prayers, and incantations. The use of bone-setters, steam baths, and heat are popular, particularly among the older generation.

Leisure was not a concept known to early Doukhobors since people were not supposed to be idle. In the early communes, before the introduction of modern farm machinery, members sang while they worked in the fields; the same practice was to be found in the village courtyards in British Columbia during the 1920s. Work and leisure thus formed an integrated whole. Among the independent Doukhobors, soccer, baseball, hockey, curling, and swimming were popular recreations. Every Sunday in the village of Pokrovka northwest of Saskatoon, for example, young and old came out to play baseball, "Russian bats," and softball. From such outings evolved baseball teams that toured the province and participated in sports days. Notable sports figures have emerged from both the independent and community groups: Peter Knight, a world champion bronco rider in the 1930s; Jon-Lee Kootnekoff, an Olympic basketball player and coach in the 1960s; Ron Cherkas, who distinguished himself as a player with the Canadian Football League a decade later; Debbie Brill, a world champion high jumper in late 1970s and early 1980s; and Tim Cheveldae, a National Hockey League goalie in the 1980s.

### Education

Schooling did not arise as an issue in the homeland largely because the Doukhobors lived in isolated communes beyond the concern of authorities. Fundamental education, culture, and religion formed one continuous whole. The religious *sobranie* provided singing and dis-



cussions and the community group, or *skhodka*, the rudimentary laws of behaviour. Young people were trained through a well-developed moral code and by the example of their elders. Individual members taught their children whatever they knew about reading and writing, and apprentices learned occupational skills from master craftsmen. In the towns, formal education tended to be dominated by the Orthodox Church. Doukhobors regarded such schools with disfavour because they were the means by which the church and the state sought to destroy their movement. Peter V. Verigin and two of his brothers, who were the youngest in a family of nine children, received some formal education because their parents could afford to pay for private tutors.

When the Doukhobors attempted to transfer their way of life to Canada in the 1890s, they found a culture dominated by English and different attitudes towards education. The Quakers conducted summer schools for the community in the early 1900s and took several pupils to Philadelphia for further study. In Saskatchewan, public schools were organized in some areas. But Verigin, after years of imprisonment in Siberia, was suspicious of any government involvement. Whatever affected the Doukhobors' way of life was interpreted as a challenge to their beliefs and was met with resistance. Initially, the source of conflict was the content of education rather than the process. Schooling was thought to prepare young people for military service, which Doukhobors considered to be wrong. It promoted competition, cheating, the notion of easy profit, and the exploitation of the working class. These tendencies were contrary to the ideals of simplicity and honest labour that the Doukhobors valued. Further, the schools encouraged young people to leave their parents and rural communities. As well, both Verigin and his son, Peter Petrovich, were afraid that if members of the community were educated, they would follow their own conscience and the leaders would lose their authority.

Difficulties over education developed further after the community Doukhobors and the Sons of Freedom moved to British Columbia. Educational practice of the day meant that children were divided into grades, faced competitive tests, participated in military drill, were subjected to political indoctrination, and were forbidden to speak Russian. Community schools in the province were supervised by a trustee from Victoria, and Doukhobors could not exercise any control. To enforce attendance, the government brought in the Community Regulation Act in 1914. This statute defined as community members anyone living "under communal or tribal conditions"; it held each member responsible for the registration of births and deaths in the community, the regular attendance at school of all children between the ages of seven and fourteen, and compliance of the entire community with the Health Act. Convictions would result in fines.

For the approximately one thousand independent Doukhobors who remained in Saskatchewan, government policies were more favourable; members of the group were also more responsive to the concept of education. In 1915 Peter G. Makaroff became the first individual of Slavic origin to enrol in a Canadian university and graduate. After earning a degree in law three years later, he became a distinguished lawyer and an avid proponent of the pacifist cause. By the 1990s the commu-

nity in Saskatchewan had produced engineers, doctors, educators, and professionals of all kinds. In British Columbia, once the children began attending schools and especially after World War II, they showed a great thirst for knowledge. Today, many from this group too have graduated from institutions of higher learning.

In order to preserve the mother tongue, Doukhobors since the 1930s have organized Russian-language classes after school or in the evening using primers, or *bukvary*, obtained from the homeland. After years of lobbying, the community Doukhobors in British Columbia succeeded in establishing heritage-language courses within the public and high school system in Grand Forks and Castlegar, paid for by the federal government. Both members of the community and non-Doukhobors have participated in this program. Since the 1960s, over 150 students have gone to the Soviet Union for language training, and others have joined tours of the country organized by local educators. Some of them have become Russian instructors in their home communities. A few married Russians and either remained in the Soviet Union or brought their spouses to Canada. Their belief in the need to build bridges between East and West has stimulated some members of the community to study the language at university. Selkirk College, located at Castlegar in the heart of the community in British Columbia, has for over two decades offered Russian-language instruction, as well as anthropology courses with a focus on Doukhor life.

### Politics

Theoretically at least, the commune system in the homeland was a self-contained one where all heads of households had a say, though a class system eventually crept in and usurped their role. The leader and his or her inner circle looked after the payment of taxes, the allocation of conscripts, and relations with officials. Lukeria Kalmykova, for example, compromised her principles when she succumbed to the state's demand to use Doukhor men, horses, and wagons to transport supplies for the tsarist troops in the Russo-Turkish War, a service for which the Doukhobors were rewarded with land grants and gold. Persecution and exile in the homeland created a distrust of church and state, however, and Verigin and his followers transferred this attitude to Canada. The move to British Columbia resulted from their refusal to take an oath of allegiance as a prerequisite for title to a homestead. Doukhobors in Canada also avoided membership on school boards, municipal councils, or other political bodies, and initially refused to register births, marriages, and deaths.

When the community Doukhobors lost their lands in 1907, they attempted to obtain redress for the injustice by lobbying the Canadian government. They also did so in the years after 1914, when authorities in British Columbia, using the Community Regulation Act, raided community property to enforce school attendance. Both independent and zealot Doukhobors pressured the British Columbia government in 1953-59 when it forcibly took Sons of Freedom children away from their parents because they would not send them to public schools (the zealots launched a campaign in 1997 seeking a government apology for this action). As early as 1903, extremist elements among the Sons of Freedom had resorted to demonstrations of public nudity and at times to arson



and bombing of private and public property to draw attention to their cause. These actions shocked the Canadian public and resulted in the arrests and imprisonment of thousands of individuals. Imprisoned zealots have also fasted to gain attention. These violent actions have been condemned by community and independent Doukhobors as contrary to the principles of love and respect for one's neighbours, and in the media the actions of a few extremists have been wrongly attributed to the group as a whole.

The Conservative government of Richard B. Bennett attempted unsuccessfully to ban all Doukhobors from voting federally (they would in any case have favoured the Liberals, who had allowed them to immigrate to Canada). In 1931, however, members of the community in British Columbia lost the right to vote both federally and provincially, a law not rescinded until 1956. In July 1934 the Society of Named Doukhobors of Canada, at its second convention, condemned the discriminatory legislation. In a strongly worded statement, the convention declared: "Members of the Society of Named Doukhobors have never recognized and do not recognize any political party. They have never entered nor will they ever enter into the ranks of any political party. They have never given nor will they ever give their votes during elections; thereby they are free from bearing any responsibility before God or man for the acts of any government established by men ... they not only gave their votes but their bodies, blood and souls, to the One and irreplaceable guardian of the souls and hearts of men, the Lord Jesus Christ, thereby attaining full freedom by passing from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of God's children." This declaration, which represented a withdrawal by community Doukhobors from participation in civic affairs, was revised and adopted by the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ in 1945.

Involvement by the independents in public affairs has been more complex. Because of its socialist platform and support for human rights, they have tended to vote for the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and its successor, the New Democratic Party (NDP). Federal and provincial politicians of all parties have courted the Doukhobor vote by providing grants for community projects, inviting a choir to open the British Columbia legislature, participating in commemorations, unveiling historic markers, and nominating the Doukhobors as a group for the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize. Although the USCC still officially supports the 1934 declaration, an examination of voting patterns in provincial and federal constituencies with large concentrations of Doukhobors shows that the majority, including USCC members, cast ballots and favour the NDP. John J. Verigin, the honorary chairman of the USCC, in 1976 urged members to exercise their franchise in a forthcoming municipal election.

The Canadian Doukhobor Society takes no direct part in Canadian politics, but its members often participate at the municipal, provincial, or federal level. Most Sons of Freedom, however, along with some other Doukhobors, continue to oppose political involvement on the grounds that they are personally responsible for their own conduct. As well, they fear that if they vote they will be forced into the armed forces. For these individuals, love, the unifying principle of life, cannot be compromised by the ritual of head counting in elections.

They prefer to participate in society in a different way from the current political system.

Opposition to militarism under the tsar and in Canada has been the central Doukhobor concern. Action in support of this belief has taken the form of petitions and letters to newspapers, provincial and federal governments, and the United Nations, walks for peace and disarmament, choral presentations, a staged burning of firearms in 1929, and other public demonstrations. In February 1989 the USCC was given official status as a non-government organization at the United Nations, allowing it to lobby on behalf of peace and disarmament. The furtherance of peace and the building of bridges between East and West has been the dominant form of political activity. Doukhobors believe that, as members of the human race who recognize no national boundaries, they have a particular responsibility to promote international understanding. Using their bilingual and transcultural skills, they have been involved in panel discussions, tours on behalf of peace, concert circuits, home visits, and humanitarian aid. After years of lobbying on the part of Doukhobors, military drills are no longer held in the schools of Grand Forks and Castlegar, a recognition by the wider society of their right to practise their pacifist beliefs.

### Intergroup Relations

Doukhobors' earliest contacts with the rest of the world came through the Tolstoyans, Quakers, and Molokans ("dairy-eaters", a kindred group in southern Russia). Because mutual aid rather than competition was at the heart of their philosophy, involvement in the cooperative movement was a natural source of intergroup contact. In Canada such interaction has included the Canadian Wheat Board and the Saskatchewan Farmers' Union, as well as cooperative retail and wholesale businesses in British Columbia. The Wheat Board, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and the Farmers' Union brought Doukhobor farmers into contact with others in the broader community at harvest time and at annual meetings. As a result of this experience, they became elevator agents in Blaine Lake, Pelly, and Verigin.

From the beginning of the CCUB, the business operations of the Doukhobor commune put its administrators in touch with accountants, bankers, wholesalers, insurance agents, and lawyers. After the collapse of the CCUB in 1938, its spirit was channelled into consumer cooperatives established in the Slocan valley and at Brilliant and a large operation called the Sunshine Valley Cooperative in Grand Forks. At first, only Doukhobors were admitted as members and no meat, guns, or tobacco were sold, but by the early 1970s membership had been extended to the general public. The cooperative was twice destroyed by arson, in 1949 and in 1975. After it was rebuilt in 1980, however, it was no longer able to attract enough members to compete with new shopping complexes and was forced to close its doors.

Service clubs such as Rotary International, Toastmasters International, the Optimist Club, the Kinsmen Club, the Elks, and the local chambers of commerce have all attracted Doukhobors, and a number have held executive positions. John J. Verigin served on the board of directors for the western region of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and with the Grand Forks Society for Handicapped Children and the local branch of the



**Red Cross.** Young people participated in a series of youth leadership conferences in Banff in the 1950s and 1960s, sponsored by the federal government, which were aimed at dispelling prejudice and discrimination in the country. In 1979 a consultative forum, the Kootenay Committee on Intergroup Relations, chaired by a senior administrator of the British Columbia attorney general's office, began meeting irregularly with representatives of the Doukhobor groups, provincial and federal agencies, and local community resource people.

The peace, disarmament, and environment movements have also brought Doukhobors together with other groups. Independent, community, and, to a lesser extent, zealot members have been active in such organizations as Project Ploughshares (the USCC is a corporate member), the Fellowship of Reconciliation, World Federalists, War Resisters International, the Voice of Women, the Canadian Peace Congress, Operation Dismantle, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian Peace Alliance, and the Canadian United Nations Association. Together with the Quakers and Mennonites and Conscience Canada, the Doukhobors lobbied the Canadian government to ensure that their status as conscientious objectors would continue to be recognized. In 1997 they worked together to help the Canadian government organize an international meeting to ban land mines.

They have also been involved in organizations promoting the preservation of Russian and Slavic culture. Since the founding of the Federation of Russian Canadians in the 1930s, they have taken part in its cultural and peace activities. Doukhobor academics have participated as presenters and organizers at meetings of the Canadian Slavic Association, and in 1974 a student youth choir performed at the International Slavists Conference in Banff. In 1994 the Learned Societies, meeting in Calgary, hosted a forum on Doukhobor history, followed by cultural events. The Canada-USSR Association, in which Doukhobors have served as branch presidents in Grand Forks, Castlegar, Saskatoon, Kamsack, and Ottawa, dates from the 1940s. Society Rodina and its predecessor, the Slavic Committee, have since the 1960s enabled community and independent Doukhobors to meet Soviet citizens, including Doukhobors, in the areas of university education, cultural exchange, and support for peace and the environment. The Toronto-based Canada-USSR Association has facilitated tours, the showing of Russian films, and presentations by Russian speakers, as has the Association of Canadians of Russian Descent.

Relations among the zealots, other Doukhobors, and non-Doukhobors have at times been bitter. The group as a whole has been subjected to vigilantism, police action, repressive legislation, and royal commissions. The issues that have divided Doukhobors, such as questions of leadership and attitudes to politics, also alienate many from the larger society. They oppose religious groups that try to infiltrate their movement in order to proselytize, politicians who seek their vote but fail to take account the Doukhobor mistrust of the military, schools in which the teaching of history glorifies war and rulers, social programs that place a higher emphasis on money than on health and social well-being, and anything that promotes war as a solution to the world's problems.

Except for their continuing opposition to militarism,

a lingering sense of injustice about the loss of their land in 1907 and 1938, and a desire to maintain their ancestral language, community and independent Doukhobors have generally accommodated to Canadian ways. The zealot factions have tended to remain separate physically and psychologically from the wider society. Until the mid-1980s and the era of perestroika, with the attendant lessening of Cold War tension and a growing recognition in the West of the richness of Slavic culture, many Doukhobors were unjustly branded as "nudists" and "trouble makers." In recent years, journalists and the general public have become more aware that individual acts of zealotry cannot be blamed on the group as a whole.

### **Group Maintenance and Ethnic Commitment**

Continuity among the Doukhobors begins with the family, which remains central to their culture. In the home they learn the traditional ideology, music, crafts, food, and hospitality. Today, many Doukhobors no longer find it necessary to read the psalms, sing hymns, or attend sobranie services on Sunday, provided that they demonstrate in everyday life the basic values of the God within, the commandment not to kill, and good neighbourliness characterized by hospitality and symbolized by bread, salt, and water. Others seek enrichment through support of their co-religionists in Canada and Russia. They find it in the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ, the voice of community Doukhobors, and the Canadian Doukhobor Society, which represents independent Doukhobor thinking but has members from all the groups. Local, regional and youth organizations have also provided continuity. Without such grass-roots support, the future of the movement would be threatened.

The loss of their land in 1907, the Community Regulation Act of 1914, denial of the right to vote for Doukhobors in British Columbia until 1956, the foreclosure on CCUB property in 1938, and such actions against the Sons of Freedom as the seizure of their children in 1953-59 rallied the Doukhobors and alienated them from the rest of Canadian society. The Cold War of the 1950s to mid-1980s had a similar effect, leading some to change their names, marry outside the group, join churches, and distance themselves from their past. Recent developments have been more positive. Museums at Castlegar (established in 1971) and Grand Forks (1972) in British Columbia and at Verigin (1980) in Saskatchewan, all housed in reconstructed Doukhobor dwellings, display heritage materials. The Verigin facility features a two-storey community home built in 1918 and several pioneer dwellings in addition to the museum and has been designated as a national heritage village. The Doukhobor Village Museum in Castlegar, located near a bridge over the Kootenay River built by the Doukhobors in 1913 and refurbished in 1998 as a heritage project, includes a restaurant and food centre. The Fructova School in Grand Forks, constructed in 1929, was restored in 1985. Designated as the Doukhobor Historical Society of British Columbia, it carries out a broad program of cultural and historical activities.

Other undertakings have contributed to the maintenance of group identity. These include panel discussions and seminars, tours by choirs across North America and Russia, the commemoration of important



anniversaries, language studies in Russia, and the hosting of Russian-speaking cultural groups in Canada. The first International Doukhobor Intergroup Symposium was held in June 1982 in cooperation with Society Rodina of Moscow. To commemorate the contribution of Tolstoy to the Doukhobor migration, the society, together with the ACRD, donated statues of the Russian author to the communities of Verigin and Castlegar in 1987. In conjunction with this event, the USCC held a heritage festival in Saskatchewan and British Columbia that featured a pageant depicting the Doukhobor history of persecution, exile, and migration to Canada. The ACRD, in cooperation with Selkirk College, in 1989 brought four prominent Soviet authors to Canada for a speaking and reading tour in the west in the company of Canadian authors. In exchange, individuals from Selkirk College lectured in Moscow and Tula three years later.

Choral workshops have stimulated interest in the art of a cappella singing. During the mid-1950s they were conducted in all the Doukhobor settlements in Saskatchewan by Gabriel W. Vereschagin. Alexander S. Shirokov of the Moscow academy of musicians came to Canada to assist choirs in British Columbia to prepare for Expo 86 in Vancouver. In 1991 Doukhobors in Saskatchewan made use of singers Peter and Lucy Voykin, who worked with district choirs, teaching them new hymns and psalms. Some eighty vocalists then combined to give concerts in Verigin and Saskatoon. The largest project was held during the 1995 centennial of the burning of firearms, when a sixty-member Voices for Peace Choir, composed of members from all three Doukhobor groups whose ages ranged from thirteen to seventy-four, toured North America and Russia giving bilingual concerts. Tours of Doukhobor villages and cultural institutions in the former Soviet Union, beginning in the 1970s, have stimulated return visits by Russian Doukhobors, an increased correspondence between the two communities, joint business ventures, and interest in working together in preparation for the centennial celebrations. Inspired by the Canadians, Russian Doukhobors in 1991 established a united organization and a youth group, produced an album of traditional singing, and took steps to republish Bonch-Bruevich's book of life.

Government resources have also helped the Doukhobors to preserve their heritage. The multicultural policy of the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau in the 1970s, by recognizing the value of heritage languages, supported the teaching of Russian in the schools of Grand Forks and Castlegar. The Canadian Museum of Civilization engaged the services of ethnographer Koozma J. Tarasoff to edit a book about the group that included contributions by Doukhobor and non-Doukhobor authors and to prepare the background materials for a major exhibition entitled "The Doukhobors: 'Spirit Wrestlers'" (1996-98). As well, several documentary films, an exhibition of photographs, dramatic productions, audio cassettes, and books on the movement have been produced. Archival, library, and photographic collections have all helped to define the nature of the Doukhobor experience by stimulating scholarly and popular research. The coming of perestroika in the former Soviet Union also had an indirect effect on the maintenance of group identity by providing interna-

tional recognition for the Russian heritage, which the Doukhobors share.

### Further Reading

The first important scholarly study of the Doukhobors was O. Novitsky, *Dukhobortsy* (Kiev, 1882), while the group's existence was publicized to the world through V. Chertkov, *Christian Martyrdom in Russia* (London, 1900). Leopold Sulerzhitskii, *V Ameriku s Dukhoborami* (Moscow, 1905) – translated into English by Michael Kalmakoff as *To America with the Doukhobors* (Regina, 1982) – is an outstanding account of the author's journey with the Doukhobors and their early life in Canada.

Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich, *Zhivotnaia kniga dukhobortsev* (English-language translation by Viktor Buiniak: *The Book of Life of Doukhobors*, Saskatoon, 1978), is the work of a Russian Marxist ethnographer who spent several decades studying Doukhobor materials. This volume continues to be the main oral source on Doukhobors. Aleksandr I. Klibanov, *Istoria religioznogo sektanstva v Rossii 60-e gody XIV v.–1917 g* (Moscow, 1965) – translated as *History of Religious Sectarianism in Russia, 1860s–1917* (New York, 1982) by Ethel Dunn and edited by Stephen Dunn – uses Soviet and Canadian sources for a conceptualization of the Doukhobors as a "social movement," an approach that widened the scope for the study of the group.

C.A. Dawson, *Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada* (Toronto, 1936) is an excellent early study of Doukhobor settlement with a focus on the push-pull forces that contributed to the group's secularization and assimilation. W. Blakemore, *Report of the Royal Commission on Matters Relating to the Sect of the Doukhobors in the Province of British Columbia* (Victoria, 1913), provides an invaluable description of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood during its period of vigorous development. Vladimir Nicholas Snegarev [Harry W. Trevor], "The Doukhobors in British Columbia" (unpublished mss., Vancouver, 1931), is a study of Doukhobor economic and social structure, agriculture, and history. H.B. Hawthorn, *The Doukhobors of British Columbia* (Vancouver, 1955), is an update of the 1950–1952 Doukhobor Research Committee report which presents an elaborate picture of communal disintegration and zealotry and a diagnosis for a holistic solution.

George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Doukhobors* (Toronto, 1968), is a well-written and balanced history of the Doukhobor movement, while William Janzen, *Limits on Liberty: The Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada* (Toronto, 1990), is a competent cross-cultural comparison of Canadian communal landholding, education of children, exemption from military service, and non-participation in selected social-welfare programs. Koozma J. Tarasoff, *Plakun Trava: The Doukhobors* (Grand Forks, B.C., 1982), is a well-documented popular history from an inside point of view, profusely illustrated with photographs. The same author's *Traditional Doukhobor Folkways: An Ethnographic and Biographic Record of Prescribed Behaviour* (Ottawa, 1977) examines changes in selected cultural values between 1900 and the 1970s. The *Summarized Report of the Joint Doukhobor Research Committee Symposium Meetings, 1974–1982* (Castlegar, B.C.), prepared and translated by Eli A. Popoff, is a valuable compilation of oral presentations and written submissions to this body.



Three anthologies published in the 1990s provide regional, national, and international perspectives on the Doukhobors. The first, Koozma J. Tarasoff and Robert B. Klymasz's *Spirit Wrestlers: Centennial Papers in Honour of Canada's Doukhobor Heritage* (Hull, Que., 1995), a publication of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, focuses on ideology, the song tradition, material culture, and various historical subjects, while also citing some rare bibliographical resources. The second, "From Russia with Love: The Doukhobors," a special issue of *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 27, no. 3, (1995), surveys one hundred years of Doukhobor history and offers reflections on Russia-Canada connections. The third, collected and edited by Koozma J. Tarasoff, *Spirit Wrestlers Voices* (Ottawa, 1998), explores the inner voices of the spirit that inspired the Doukhobors' values of love, cooperation, hard work, and international kinship. Finally, Carl J. Tracie's *"Toil and Peaceful Life": Doukhobor Village Settlement in Saskatchewan, 1899-1918* (Regina, 1996) is a work of historical geography that analyses the unique cultural landscape created by the Community Doukhobors in Saskatchewan.

The best archival and related materials on the Doukhobors in Russia, their connection to Leo Tolstoy, and their emigration to Canada are found in the Museum of the History of Religion (St Petersburg), the Lenin State Library (Moscow), and the Tolstoy Literary Museum (Moscow). The official correspondence relating to the emigration to Canada is contained in the records of the Colonial Office and Foreign Office in the Public Record Office, London. The Library of the Society of Friends in London contains a useful collection of letters, diaries, minutes, and notes dealing with relief work organized by the Quakers at the end of the last century. The Friends' Historical Library at Swarthmore College, Philadelphia, contains other materials on relief and educational work by Quakers on the western prairies.

The University of British Columbia Library has one of the largest collections in North America of materials on the Doukhobors, including newspaper clippings, correspondence, and minutes going back to their first years of settlement in the province. The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library of the University of Toronto holds the James Mavor Doukhobor Papers and other papers dealing with the preliminary negotiations on Doukhobor entry into Canada, as well as miscellaneous correspondence dating to 1922.

The British Columbia Provincial Archives has materials similar to those found in the University of British Columbia Library collections and also an extensive and annotated collection of historical photographs. The Saskatchewan Provincial Archives has important materials as well, including tape-recorded interviews and annotated collections by P.G. Makaroff, K.J. Tarasoff, and other independent Doukhobors. Finally, various holdings in the National Archives of Canada – those dealing with Immigration (RG76), Dominion Lands Branch (RG15), RCMP records from the turn of the century, and so on – should also be consulted.

KOOZMA J. TARASOFF

## DUTCH

### Origins

The Dutch are lowlanders, a geographical descriptor which is reflected in the very name of their state, the Netherlands – the Low Lands. Their first settlements were in the marshes that marked the estuary where the Rhine and Maas rivers empty into the North Sea. The water bodies that pervaded and surrounded the Netherlands throughout its history were to have a profound impact on Dutch civilization. On the one hand, from an early date, the many rivers of the Netherlands made transportation relatively easy within the country and provided easy access to the sea. On the other hand, the North Sea has posed a constant threat of floods, limited the amount of habitable land, and periodically destroyed the homes and property of a people who live "under the sea."

Initially, there was little that distinguished the Germanic-speaking Dutch from their Flemish and German neighbours, and there was little to attract outsiders to their low-lying lands. Roman rule and culture barely penetrated their watery landscape, and Christian missionaries at first had a difficult time converting the Dutch from their pagan worship. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the towns in the Netherlands were growing steadily in size and, together with towns in what are present-day Belgium and Luxembourg, were gradually consolidated into a single territorial unit under the rule of the dukes of Burgundy in northeastern France. Commercial life developed, and outside interests became aware of the financial and political potential of the Dutch towns that straddled the outlet of northwestern Europe's most important rivers. It was also during the first half of the sixteenth century that the Protestant Reformation brought Calvinism to most of the Dutch towns and villages.

As adherents of a new religion and as people who had become accustomed to an advanced level of urban self-government, the Calvinist Dutch found it difficult to function under Spain's autocratic king, Philip II, who during the second half of the sixteenth century had gained control over all the lowlands that had previously been ruled by Burgundy. The Dutch were particularly opposed to Philip's centralizing policies and his fierce opposition to Protestantism. As a result, a revolt broke out in the 1560s under the leadership of William of Orange. A long struggle ensued between the northern lowland provinces, where Calvinism was strongest, and Catholic Spain. It culminated in 1609 with the secession of seven provinces north of the Scheldt River. Formally called the United Provinces, the Dutch republic was recognized as an independent state by international treaty in 1648.

The achievement of independence let loose a previously constrained and fettered Dutch nation. The seventeenth century became the Netherlands' "golden age" as the entrepreneurial spirit manifested itself in the development of a commercial empire that circled the globe. Dutch traders and colonists in Asia, Africa, and the Americas generated enormous wealth for their European homeland which, in turn, was able to experience a rate of material and cultural growth never equalled before or since. Architecture, art, and science all benefited from the infusion of massive amounts of capital from

**DRUZE.** See **LEBANESE**

**DUNKARDS.** See **GERMANS**



Whenever Canadians are asked to describe a salient feature of their country, they are likely to emphasize its multicultural aspect. Such a characterization makes eminent sense, considering the demographic reality of Canada, with its wide array of peoples representing many different ethnocultural traditions. But, aside from stating the statistically obvious, many respondents also suggest that the multicultural aspect of Canada reflects a social ideal in which diversity is considered to be a positive phenomenon. While there may be debate about whether or not ethnocultural diversity is a good thing, there is little doubt that to understand Canadian society, both past and present, it is essential to know about the country's multicultural reality. As Professor Harold Troper so aptly points out in an entry in this volume, 'Ethnicity does not replace Canadian identity; it *is* Canadian identity.'

From the Introduction

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